

THE CATHOLIC RADICAL

“...to foster a society based on creed instead of greed.” Peter Maurin

August/September 2019

Price: For whatever it's worth.

Something Lost

by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

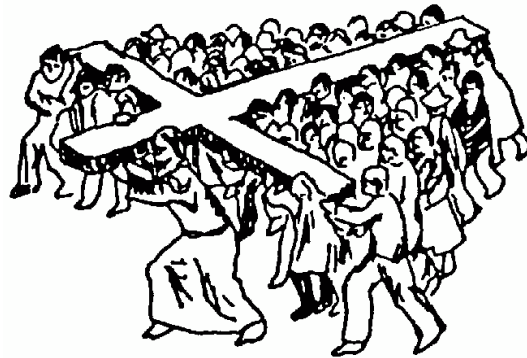
Back in the 1990s, I asked an intern, “If you were a German who knew in advance about the Holocaust, would you have sheltered Jews?” The young man replied earnestly, “Would I be at risk for doing so?” When I said the risk would be considerable, he answered without hesitation, “No.” So I asked him, “What if the risk were small but the inconvenience would be considerable?” Again, he said, “No.” So, I asked, “What if there was no risk and no inconvenience?” After a long pause, he said, “Possibly.”

That white, nineteen-year-old, who drove a flashy red sports car and planned to go skiing in Switzerland for a holiday, had no inclination whatsoever to put the needs of others ahead of his own.

While most of us would say we don't espouse a “How-does-it-affect-number-one?” philosophy, when put in extreme situations, we too prioritize the needs of our loved ones and our selves. Constructs like the Just War Theory and self-defense laws become our guiding principles during times of famine, plague, poverty, and war. We adopt lifeboat ethics that rationalize refusing aid to desperate people outside our inner circle under the assumption that to do otherwise would doom everyone. Popular culture, **The Lord of the Flies** and **The Walking Dead** for example, argues that in severe circumstances nice guys finish last, if at all.

Luckily, finding ourselves stranded on a desert island or threatened by a zombie apocalypse remains unlikely. Most of the time, we can spare compassion for others without risking our own lives. In fact, liberals argue that we can afford a great

deal more largess than we thought we could. They pedal living wages, more open borders, and affordable housing, healthcare, and higher education as morally right and, in the long run, beneficial. The same can be said about nuclear disarmament and



eschewing fossil fuels. Activists say we'd get a peace dividend from the former and green jobs from the latter, a win-win.

Unfortunately, the pessimism of conservatives cannot be completely dismissed. Anyone who has opened their home to the poor or tried to break up a fight can testify that altruism comes with risk. When the sacrifice gets close to the bone, liberals and conservatives alike tend to bail out.

And yet, in good and bad times, some people live remarkable lives for others. Once in a while, we even hear about men, women, or even children, as in the case of a student in the May 7 school shooting in Colorado, who give their lives to save others. While self-interest and fear preclude most of us from similar acts of bravery, we admire heroes. In movies, plays, and books, we gravitate toward Christ figures. Even the most hard-hearted cynics, shed a

(Continued on Page 2)

Faith and Disarmament

by Raymond Hunthausen

*Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from a speech the Catholic archbishop of Seattle gave June 12, 1981. The speech's clarion call for disarmament remains urgent as the US spends \$35 billion a year modernizing its nuclear arsenal. The complete text is in Frank Fromherz's new biography, **A Disarming Spirit: the life of Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen**.*

I can recall vividly hearing the news of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima in 1945.[...] I could not then put into words the shock I felt from the news that a city of hundreds of thousands of people had been devastated by a single bomb. Hiroshima challenged my faith as a Christian in a way I am only now beginning to understand. [...]

I am sorry to say that I did not speak out against the evil of nuclear weapons until many years later. I was especially challenged on the issue by an article I read in 1976 by Jesuit Father Richard McSorley, titled “It's a Sin to Build a Nuclear Weapon.”[...]

I was also challenged to speak out against nuclear armament by the nearby construction of the Trident submarine base.[...] One Trident submarine has the destructive equivalent of 2,040 Hiroshima bombs.[...] I say with deep consciousness of these words that Trident is the Auschwitz of [Washington's] Puget Sound.[...]

[Our] present crisis goes deeper than politics. I have heard many perceptive political analyses of the nuclear situation, but their common element is despair. It is

(Continued on Page 4)

Lost

(Continued from Page 1)

tear for those who regret that they have but one life to give for others.

In his teaching and by his example, Jesus offered a radically unselfish ethos: Go the extra mile, give to those who beg of you, welcome the stranger, free the prisoner, feed the hungry, take nothing for the journey, put away your sword, and, most extraordinary of all, love your enemy, something Jesus did on Golgotha. With his own version of the coaching adage “no pain, no gain,” Christ says “**Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.**” And lest that metaphor misses the mark, Jesus spells it out plainly by telling his disciples to take up the cross every day.

So central is the message of sacrificial love in Christianity that the cross is ubiquitous. Crosses festoon the exterior and interior of churches. Catholics begin and end every prayer with the sign of the cross. We are marked with it at baptism and the last rites. The willingness to die for others dominates Christian art and hagiography.

But, to suggest that extraordinarily selfless behavior can be compelled by statute is not only absurd, but contradictory. Christianity, to borrow a phrase from Dorothy Day, is a “revolution of the heart”. The religion spread like wildfire from a back-water Roman province because of the contagious love, joy, and courage of

its followers in the face of poverty and persecution. Far from our modern flight from danger, many early Christians freely accepted what they called “the crown of martyrdom.” The Gospel and lives of the saints set hearts on fire. No one was forced into the lion’s den.

Although I believe human life is precious at all stages of development, I reject criminalizing abortion. Threatening pregnant women and doctors who favor abortion with jail hardens hearts. The anti-



abortion laws currently sweeping the US are incapable of infusing the selflessness required to bear an unwanted pregnancy. Laws cannot persuade women that an unwanted pregnancy is an invitation to holiness rather than an impossible burden.

Abortion rights advocates are right to say it’s outrageous to force a victim of rape or incest to carry their child to term. Jesus did not say, “Take up my cross, or I’ll put you in jail.”

With poetry rather than argumentation, Jesus painted compelling portraits of people who put the needs of others ahead of their own. Via parables, backed up by his own actions, Jesus invited us to live a new way, a way without fear and marked by joy. The fact that carrying an unwanted pregnancy for nine months is now considered an intolerable sacrifice to make for an unseen stranger reflects our failure to share and model Christianity as the wonder that it actually is. We could learn a lot from Dr. Suess’s Horton, who risks his own freedom and life over his conviction that “a person’s a person, no matter how small.”

I know a devoted peace activist who interrupted his career for a decade in order to provide home care for his dying mother. When asked if he resented this obligation, he replied, “Those proved to be the most rewarding years of my life.” Although the cross always appears daunting, in the end, Christ’s “**burden is light.**”

Jesus tells us that his approach to life is like a buried treasure or a priceless pearl. Transforming the Gospel from a gem we yearn for into a legalistic cattle prod breaks my heart. When I was young, I so admired Jesus that I thought if I could catch a glimpse of his face, I’d be consumed with love for the rest of my life. Similar devotion empowered seven Catholics who were arrested last April for protesting against nuclear weapons at Georgia’s Kings Bay Naval Base. I’m sure they would say that the year many of them have already spent in jail is a small price to pay to save lives. We’d do so much more to end abortion by witnessing to our faith than by trying to force it down anyone’s throat. Ω

Editor’s Note: Please join Nobel peace laureates Mairead Maguire, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Jody Williams, Dr. Ira Helfand, and Beatrice Fihn petitioning US Attorney General William Barr to dismiss all charges against the King’s Bay Plowshares 7. To add your name search “Global Kings Bay Plowshares Petition.”

Vol. 36, No. 1

THE

August/September 2019

CATHOLIC



RADICAL

Published every two months by:

The Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker Community

52 Mason Street, Worcester, MA 01610 Telephone: (508) 753-3588, 753-3089

Email: theresecw2@gmail.com

Founded in 1933 by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the Catholic Worker is a lay movement serving the poor while denouncing injustice and proclaiming peace. We are not tax exempt. We rely entirely on the generosity of our supporters to meet our expenses. We welcome volunteers, letters, poetry, articles, artwork, and donations.

The Mustard Seed

by Nicole Apostola

Editor's Note: Founded in 1972, Worcester's Mustard Seed Catholic Worker feeds between 70 and 200 people five days a week and has assisted Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker many times.

If I'm going to tell you about volunteering at the Mustard Seed soup kitchen, I may as well begin with the miracle of the cell phone.

It was a sunny, warm day in a spring full of coldish, rainy days, and we were being treated to the dulcet tones of "I can't believe you lost my phone!"

The object of this shout, B, is a young woman who's been through a lot in life. She attracts drama like a black hole attracts light; once you catch sight of her, you know a crisis will surely follow.

Her boyfriend, C, is, as usual, doing his best Stanley Kowalski impression. Those of us volunteering outside try to ascertain the situation, which looks grim. The cell phone, a nice Samsung, was purchased mere hours before.

B and C know, far better than we, the two universal rules of a cell phone at a soup kitchen: it is a priceless lifeline to those with limited housing options, and—once lost (or taken)—will never be found again.

"Why did you leeeave it in the bathroom?"

B hurries to the bathroom, where she was mere minutes before, checking the limited shelf space and the trash, but the phone isn't there.

"I can't believe I gave you my new phone!"

Could she have left it at a table outside or inside? No.

Has C retained the receipt? Of course not. And he paid in cash, so there's no record of the sale. And he definitely doesn't remember the phone number.

C continues to yell. He and B walk a

ways down the street, and we get what we know is but a temporary reprieve.

"He won't yell too much longer," one volunteer says. She has never been in far-below-freezing weather with C while he yelled for hours. We envy her optimism.

C comes back with B. The yelling has not abated.

Does he remember the cell number?

He does!

I dial it using a borrowed phone, and it rings...three times...four times...no one

star who's willing to heave trash into the dumpster.

D had taken another college volunteer around the neighborhood to clean up the general area around the Mustard Seed.

There, in D's hand, is the cell phone we thought was lost forever.

"I don't even know how he saw it," said the other volunteer. "It was right under the tire of a parked car."

That's our D: fashion icon, miracle worker.



Nicole Apostola, Sheila Costa, and Catherine Ann Cormier

The cell phone, now back with its rightful owner, saves us from at least five minutes' worth of yelling and ranting.

So that's the Mustard Seed: the oldest soup kitchen in Worcester and still pretty true to its Catholic Worker roots.

My personal goals in volunteering are twofold:

To ensure that guests

picks up...and then -- unbelievably! -- an answer!

Of course, I can't hear anything above "YOU LOST MY PHONE! WHY DID I GIVE YOU MY PHONE?!"

I shout at the recipient of the phone that they'd better come to the front of the Mustard Seed right now or else.

Through the shouting I hear, "but I'm already in front of the Mustard Seed."

I turn around and there are two college volunteers who'd been sent out to pick up around the neighborhood.

D is one of our regular Friday night volunteers. He attends Quinsigamond Community College, studying engineering, but often comes on a Friday night to help serve dinner and clean up inside and outside the building.

D is our most glamorous volunteer. If his million-watt smile doesn't blind you, his gold sunglasses will. His clothes are more fashion-forward than anything that has ever been sold in Worcester. He arrives like a movie star, but he's a movie

have a welcome, safe environment, and to make the Mustard Seed the best possible neighbor it can be.

For the former, that can mean:

- making sure there's milk set out and that the cup dispenser is filled
- serving meals
- filling guests' requests for hats, gloves, coats, etc.
- cleaning the kitchen, eating area, and bathrooms after a meal.

For the latter, that can mean picking up trash around the immediate (and not-so-immediate) area. Let me tell you, you get a lot more people thanking you for picking up trash along Austin Street than you do picking up trash in the woods!

It can be challenging. I will not lie. However, this is one of those "toughest job you'll ever love" opportunities.

For anyone wanting to see and serve Christ in the poor, and witness the occasional miracle, you are hereby invited to drop by 93 Piedmont Street, 3-7 PM Fridays, or be in touch at mustardseedcw.org. Ω

Disarmament

(Continued from Page 1)

no wonder. The nuclear arms race can sum up in a few final moments the violence of tens of thousands of years, raised to an almost infinite power—a demonic reversal of the Creator's power of giving life. But politics is itself powerless to overcome the demonic in its midst. It needs another dimension. I am convinced that a way out of this terrible crisis can be discovered by our deepening in faith and prayer so that we learn to rely not on missiles for our security but on the loving care of the One who gives and sustains life. We need to return to the Gospel with open hearts to learn once again what it is to have faith....

To understand today the Gospel call to peacemaking, and its consequence, persecution, I want to refer especially to these words of Our Lord in Mark: **"If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let that person renounce self and take up the cross and follow me. For anyone who wants to save one's life will lose it; but anyone who loses one's life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it."** (Mark 8:34-35)

[...] Jesus' call to the cross was a call to love[God and one's neighbor in so direct a way that the authorities in power could only regard it as subversive and revolutionary. "Taking up the cross," "losing one's life," meant being willing to die at the hands of political authorities for the truth of the Gospel, for that love of God in which we are all one.

As followers of Christ we need to take up our cross in the nuclear age. I believe that one obvious meaning of the cross is unilateral disarmament. Jesus' acceptance of the cross rather than the sword raised in his defense is the Gospel's statement of unilateral disarmament. We are called to follow.[...]

I am told by some that unilateral disarmament in the face of atheistic communism is insane. I find myself observing that nuclear armament by anyone is itself atheistic, and anything but sane. I am also told that the choice of unilateral disarmament is a political impossibility in this country. If so, perhaps the reason

is that we have forgotten what it would be like to act out of faith. But I speak here of that choice not as a political platform—it might not win elections—but as a moral imperative for followers of Christ. A choice as been put before us: anyone who wants to save one's own life by nuclear arms will lose it; but anyone who loses one's life by giving up those arms for Jesus' sake, and for the sake of the Gospel of love, will save it.

To ask one's country to relinquish its security in arms is to encourage risk—a more reasonable risk than constant nuclear



1987 photo of Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen

escalation, but a risk, nevertheless. I am struck by how much more terrified we Americans often are by talk of disarmament than by the march to nuclear war. We whose nuclear arms terrify millions around the globe are terrified by the thought of being without them. The thought of our nation without such power feels naked. Propaganda and a particular way of life have clothed us to death.[...] Nuclear arms protect privilege and exploitation. Giving them up would mean our having to give up economic power over other peoples. Peace and justice go together. On the path we now follow, our economic policies toward other countries require nuclear weapons. Giving up the weapons would mean giving up more than our means of global terror. It would mean giving up the reason for such terror—our privileged place in the world.

How can such a process, of taking up the cross of nonviolence, happen in a country where our government seems paralyzed by arms corporations? In a country where many of the citizens, perhaps most of the citizens, are numbed into passivity by the

very magnitude and complexity of the issue while being horrified by the prospect of nuclear holocaust? Clearly some action is demanded—some form of nonviolent resistance. Some people may choose to write to their elected representatives at the national and state level, others may choose to take part in marches, demonstrations, or similar forms of protest. Obviously there are many ways that action can be taken.

I would like to share a vision of still another action that could be taken: simply this—a sizable number of people of the state of Washington, 5,000, 10,000, 1.2 million people refusing to pay 50% of their taxes in nonviolent resistance to nuclear murder and suicide. I think that would be a definite step toward disarmament.[...]

I fully realize that many will disagree with my position on unilateral disarmament and tax resistance. I also realize that one can argue endlessly about specific tactics, but no matter how we differ on specific tactics, one thing at least is certain. We must demand over and over again that our political leaders make peace and disarmament, and not war and increased armaments, their first priority.[...]

The nuclear arms race can be stopped. Nuclear weapons can be abolished. That I believe with all my heart and faith, my sisters and brothers. The key to that nuclear-free world is the cross at the center of the Gospel, and our response to it. The terrible responsibility which you and I have in this nuclear age is that we profess a faith whose God has transformed death into life in the person of Jesus Christ. We must make that faith real. Life itself depends on it. Our faith sees the transformation of death, through the cross of suffering love, as an ongoing process. That process is our way into hope of a new world. Jesus made it clear that the cross and empty tomb didn't end with Him. Thank God they didn't. We are living in a time when new miracles are needed, when a history threatened by overwhelming death needs resurrection by Almighty God. God alone is our salvation, through the acceptance in each of our lives of a nonviolent cross of suffering love. Let us call on the Holy Spirit to move us all into that nonviolent action which will take us to our own cross, and to the new earth beyond. Ω

Small Group Praying

by Will Raymond

Seen from a country road
far past the point where the town lights fade,
the stars in all their glory amaze,
stretched out across the night sky blazing,
and I think, "Nothing could be more beautiful than this,"
until for a moment there comes to mind the image
of a small group praying.

Red roses astound.
Their blood-red velvet petals curled at top around.
Their fragrance more pure than all this is not earthly bound.
And I think, "Nothing could be more evocative than this,"
till my mind harkens back
to a circle of friends holding hands around
a plain wooden table, their altar bare and pure,
saying your prayer from long ago
in a clear and even tone,
there in a small group praying.

Mountain vistas, forest glens, mountain lion's eye
captivate and thrill beyond compare
until my mind reflects again
on all that I have seen and known
with neighbors in a neighbor's home
in their simple clothes, unadorned,
gathered in a small group praying.

Kingly crown and diadem
sparkle in their brilliant light.
Diamonds, sapphires, rubies, emeralds set in gold
to display the power of the realm.
And I think, "Nothing could be more precious than this,"
until my mind wanders back again to the scenes I have known
of plain folk without visions or bliss
yet still clearly guided in their call by a mystical kiss
there in a small group praying.

Geniuses, artists, warriors, and saints,
all the great and worthy of the earth's renown,
dazzle with their insights, words, and deeds profound.
And I think, "Nothing could be greater than this,"
until I see it is time to go,
for there are folk I know
who keep their faith and the appointed time
for antiphons, psalms, readings, and prayers
and the simple chants I bring for us to sing
as we seek the source of everything
there in a small group praying. Ω



In 2018, Human Rights Watch accused Saudi Arabia of arbitrary arrests, torture, sham trials, imprisonment, and execution of peaceful dissidents, as well as discrimination against women and religious minorities. The also said the Saudis committed "numerous violations of international and humanitarian law" in their war in Yemen, where thousands of civilians have been killed or wounded and, due largely to a Saudi blockade, 17 million Yemenis are unable to meet basic food and medical needs.

On December 12, 2018, after the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman ordered the murder of *Washington Post* journalist Jamal Khashoggi, Congressional Republicans and Democrats joined to demand an end to US military support for the Saudi war on Yemen. President Trump vetoed their resolution.

Since the Saudis beheaded 37 political prisoners and crucified another. A boy accused of leading a protest for human rights when he was ten, has, after eight years of torture and solitary confinement, been sentenced to death.

In June, the Saudi Arabian and Emirati governments pledged three billion dollars in military and economic aid to the prop up the military leaders of Sudan who killed hundreds of unarmed pro-democracy protesters. On June 10, *The New York Times* reported that the Saudis sent heavy weapons and military vehicles to the "ruthless" Sudanese Rapid Support Forces, a group drawn from militia accused of genocide and mass rape in Darfur.

When combined with Saudi Arabia's long-standing exportation of Islamic extremism (it was hardly a coincidence that virtually all of the perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks, including Osama bin Laden, were Saudis) there can be little doubt that continued American military support of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is unconscionable. Ω

Presidents of War

reviewed by Scott Schaeffer-Duffy

Presidents of War: by Michael Beschloss, 2018, Crown Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House

You might think a 589-page book that took its author ten years to write, would take that long to read, but you'd be wrong. Michael Beschloss' **Presidents of War** is a quick read and fascinating history. Starting with President James Madison's War of 1812, Beschloss recounts the decision-making that led Presidents Polk, Lincoln, McKinley, Wilson, Roosevelt, Truman, and Johnson to war. Beschloss shows how chief executives used various schemes to wrest the Constitutionally-granted power to declare war away from Congress. In his conclusion, he says, "The Founders would probably be thunderstruck to discover that the option to start a war of a magnitude they would find inconceivable—killing hundreds of millions of human beings in less than an hour—now rests on the whim of a President."

While each President engaged in various forms of perfidy, James Polk and Lyndon Johnson's shocked me the most. Beschloss says, "Just a half century into the life of the American Republic, Polk had crushed the Founders' hope that their gleaming new country would not indulge in the Old World monarch's habit of manufacturing false pretexts for wars that they sought for other, more secret reasons." Beschloss goes on to tell us, "When Polk lied to Congress with his ludicrous claim that he had neither 'desired nor provoked' the Mexican War and waged it with no 'view to conquest,' his mendacity compromised his moral stature and established another bad example for later Presidents."

Polk's seizure of Mexican territory stained the US's reputation, but I believe Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War did more harm. Head of the Armed Services

Committee, Senator Richard Russell warned Johnson on May 27, 1964 that Vietnam "is one of those places where you can't win. [...] The French report that they lost 250,000 men and spent a couple of billion of their money, and two billion of ours down there, and got the hell whipped out of them." Most of Johnson's advisors expressed equal opposition, but, afraid to look weak in the presidential race against Senator Barry Goldwater, Johnson lied to Congress and the American people about a North Vietnamese attack in the Gulf of Tonkin and then used the power Congress granted him to escalate a war that would ultimately leave over 58,000 Americans and two million South East Asians dead. Johnson did not desist when House Majority Leader Mike Mansfield told him in 1965, "You bomb [North Vietnam], you get nothing. You just build up more hatred." Neither did



Lyndon Johnson takes the oath to "preserve, protect, and defend" the US Constitution

he withdraw US troops when Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara told him in October 1967, it was "impossible to win the war militarily." Afraid to be seen as the first US President to lose a war, Johnson extended it pointlessly, as President Nixon conceded in January 1972, when he told his National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger, "We have had ten years of *total* control of the air in Laos and Vietnam. The result = Zilch.

In military terms, Nixon was correct; in human terms, he was dead wrong. Like our seemingly never-ending wars since September 11, 2001, the Vietnam War resulted in pointless human casualties and material costs.

Presidents of War is an invaluable resource for anyone who hopes to prevent future military catastrophes. Beschloss makes a compelling case for the necessity to drastically diminish presidential war-making power. Read his book now. Ω

Fitness Series



The City of Worcester, in collaboration with the YWCA, is sponsoring a free fitness series that runs until September 28. Organizers note, "people who do more aerobic exercise live longer and enjoy better moods and improved health," but "only 50% of Massachusetts residents get enough aerobic physical activity."

There's something for everyone, including:

180 Boot-Camp: conditioning and strength class

Capoeira: Brazilian martial art that fuses dance, martial arts, and acrobatics

Dance Fit 4 U: Latin and classic rock jams for all ages

Fit Circuit: strength and conditioning combined with brisk walking

Pilates Yoga Blend: strength, balance, flexibility, and core conditioning

Tai Chi: graceful exercise described as meditation in motion that reduces stress

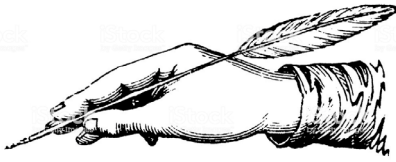
Walking for Wellness: group walks for all ages

Yoga for All Levels: postures and conscious breathing with mental focus

For a complete schedule of day and evening events, offered in Spanish, Portuguese, French, and English, go to: www.worcesterma.gov/summer-fitness. Ω



LETTERS



Scott,
I was walking down my street and a neighbor, imagine! A neighbor started yelling at me (and my Brazil shirt, I guess) and told me to kiss his ass and go back to where I'm legally from. I asked: "To California, where I was born???" What is one to do with this state of affairs?

Maria Rodrigues
Brighton, Massachusetts

Editor's Note: The author of this letter is the Chair of the Political Science Department at Worcester's College of the Holy Cross and a dear friend to Saints Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker. The fact that anyone would make such a crude and hateful statement to her is a shocking reminder of the time in which we live. Xenophobes, ultra-nationalists, and racists, who have taken political power in many countries, are emboldening people to scapegoat national, ethnic, and religious groups for problems they have not caused. It is extremely important for everyone, especially white Americans, to stand by those targeted with hatred. As peace activists who saw the diverse nation of Yugoslavia torn apart by ethnic hatred, we remind our readers that what Professor Rodrigues endured and President Trump exhibited on July 14 when he told four American Congresswomen to "go back where they came from" must be vigorously condemned lest it grow in frequency and violence.

Dear Scott and Claire,
Summertime means glorious days full of joy and fun, but also a tendency to not do altruistic deeds.

Sorry to hear of Michael True's death. I was familiar with his name from newspapers, but did not know details.

...I really enjoyed the article on religious intolerance. I used to think of

Buddhism as one of the more peaceful faiths, but this is not reflected in Myanmar in the persecution of the Muslims.

I was quite surprised when I saw an article from Jeff Jacoby on some of #45's [President Trump] policies. I always thought of Jacoby as very conservative. I guess the bottom line is there are nuances and degrees of "right" or "left."

Phil Brewer
Rutland, Massachusetts

Claire and Scott:

As usual, *The Catholic Radical* is thoughtful and well written! I especially resonated to Michael True's eulogy and Scott's uncharacteristically humble house column. I'm so glad I know you both!

Rosalie Riegler
Evanston, Illinois

Editor's Note: Both Michael True and Scott liked to joke, "Humility is for those with nothing to brag about."

Dear Claire and Scott,
The article in the 6/7 *Catholic Radical* by Jeff Jacoby ["America Isn't Full"] was a most pleasant surprise.

I also enjoyed seeing the photo of my dear friends, Art Brien and Michael True, so great a man he was indeed.

Richard McCarthy
Lawrence, Massachusetts

Editor's Note: One of our readers told us that she believed the article "Religious Intolerance" should have mentioned the systematic extermination of 1.5 million Armenians by the Ottoman Turkish government in 1915. We agree.



Armenian Orphans
Elder Photo Collection
with permission of the Armenian
National Institute

Catholic Worker Calendar

August 6 — Hiroshima Day Vigil for Nuclear Disarmament: Please join us, on the 74th anniversary of the atomic bombing, as we call for an end to the nuclear arms race. 4- 5 P.M., Lincoln Square, Worcester.

August 14 & 28, September 11 & 25 — Evening Prayer: Join us for prayer and Taizé chant. 7 P.M., 52 Mason Street, Refreshments to follow.

August 17 & September 21 — Vigil to Reverse the Gun Culture: Please join us at The Gun Parlour shooting range. 12:30-1:30 P.M., 170 Prescott Street, Worcester.



September 14 — Vigil to Remove ROTC: Please join us on the Feast of the Holy Cross for our annual vigil to end military training at Worcester's College of the Holy Cross. Noon - 1 P.M., in front of Dinand Library.

September 20 — #ClimateStrike: Please join us on this day of national action to save the earth from the worst aspects of the climate emergency. More information: therese2@gmail.com.

September 25 — Sing Along with Dan Burke: Don't miss an enjoyable evening singing popular tunes accompanied by Worcester's star vocalist and piano player, Dan Burke. We will provide the lyrics, food, and drink. Send us your favorite songs by early September. 7 P.M., 52 Mason Street.

Mason Street Musings

“Your outpouring of love for me and my family has given me a taste of paradise,” the mother said to the crowd gathered at the funeral home in Brighton, Massachusetts. So many people had come, they filled every room, spilled into the foyer and onto the sidewalk that divided a perfect lawn. Some wiped their eyes, others looked around vaguely, a few even smiled. There is no uniform mourning face for an eighteen-year-old boy who died while rock-climbing on a beautiful beach in Brazil.

Only three lessons and he thought he was an expert, his mother said.

The day before his fatal fall, she had watched him climb. Up and up and up. “You are going to die,” she called out,

knowing even then she could not contain him. She had earlier rescued him from drowning after he plunged into deep waters, forgetting he could not swim. He had always been boundless, a child who



“Enjoying Life Completely,” a photo by Abhai Asokani

could not stay in his body. Photos at the funeral parlor verified the point. The boy is leaping spread-eagle, surfing on the

crest of a wave, waving his head wildly as he throttles his snare drums. His name is Jairam, which in Hindi means “Victory for God”.

Jairam was living out his *duende*, my friend said. The word, made famous by the Spanish poet Federico García Lorca, refers to the unique spirit within each of us, our soulful vitality. Only you can express your *duende*. Only I can express mine. To do so is to live totally.

The mother’s gratitude at the funeral parlor was a marvel to me. Encumbered with grief, she possessed the sensibilities of a mystic. Even in the grey, watery world of loss, she could grasp love’s solidity, its capacity to reinvigorate. *You have given me a taste of paradise.*

Standing beside her, I felt a strong desire to live more totally in the habitat I occupy, which is this old, yellow house on Mason Street where homeless men and women come and go. Some arrive in a swirl of anxiety; others come so worn from surviving, their *duende* appears as nothing more than a winking ember. Flowers, vegetables, and weeds march across the garden in the back. Birds crowd the lone feeder in the front. The yellow house sits in a country gnashing its teeth with greed and fear. Most mornings, I wake to a husband agitated by the latest news report.

Yet every day brings an opportunity to be boundless, to climb the rocks like Jairam. If I pay attention, if I look up from my plate of desire and dread, a plate I have set for myself, I can sometimes taste the paradise God offers through those around me. Thanks to all of you who have helped create this habitat with your donations, your prayers and loving interest. You continue to help us continue. Ω

Claire

FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
WORCESTER, MA
PERMIT NO. 271

SS. Francis & Thérèse Catholic Worker
52 Mason Street
Worcester, MA, USA 01610
(508) 753-3588 & (508) 753-3089
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED